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Celebrating Greatness

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Celebrating Greatness

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Communications in Information Literacy

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Celebrating Greatness

Several months have passed since our co-editor-in-chief and dear friend, Bob Schroeder, announced that he would be retiring in the autumn of 2018. Since the time of that announcement, I have pondered how to craft an editorial that captures the enormity of Bob's impact on the journal, and by extension, on CIL's readership and the broader information literacy community. I hope the following will suffice.

I have known Bob since 2007; that is when he volunteered to serve in CIL's inaugural cohort of manuscript reviewers. His work as a reviewer, and later as a contributing author, was so exceptional that when the time came to expand the ranks of our senior editorial team, he was our first choice. Thank goodness, Bob agreed to join the editorial team in 2012, and since that time he has led the journal along a path of innovation and expansion that we could not have anticipated. He facilitated the growth of the journal's pool of manuscript reviewers from 60+ to 100+; he spearheaded two timely and highly cited theme issues; and he tirelessly recruited top talent in the field to write some of the journal's most impactful feature articles and opinion pieces.

Bob's passion for critical forms of scholarship influenced all of us at CIL. His ties to the critical information literacy community, in particular, resulted in some of our most compelling contributed papers from experienced and new voices alike. We often read of the tensions that persist between the theoretical and practical wings of the library field; however, I can testify that Bob's critical lens deeply affected his work as a practicing librarian, a prolific author, and a devoted journal editor.

Beyond his headline accomplishments, Bob mentored many new manuscript reviewers and early career authors. He possesses a gentle and disarming manner, and he is especially skilled at connecting with people in what sometimes amounts to an intimidating scholarly publishing environment. It is easy to quantify his contributions in terms of volumes, issues, and published papers, but in my view the real measure of Bob as an editor is his ability to communicate with the range of CIL's stakeholders with empathy, kindness, and scrupulous professionalism.

There is another aspect to Bob's work and overall impact with CIL that needs to be amplified. Most readers of this editorial will know that CIL is an open access publication in the truest sense; there are no barriers to access, and there are no author processing charges or other regressive publication fees. The devotees who manage the journal are fervent

believers in free access to scholarly information, and by virtue of his editorial work, Bob has advanced the cause of open access and helped to build quantifiable capacity in the open research environment.

I communicate with Bob nearly every day. On most weekdays we exchange multiple messages: most concerning the operations of CIL, but also notes of support, jokes, recipes, insults, and general silliness. I rely on him; so too does the rest of the editorial team. Simply put, I do not remember how the journal was managed prior to his arrival as co-editor-in-chief. From my perspective, I can assert that his impact on the professional literature, and by extension, on professional practice, has been immense.

I am pleased to report that we have secured the exceptionally talented April Schweikhard from Kennesaw State University to join the senior editorial team, and that she is benefitting from Bob's mentorship and insight. April will address the CIL readership in an editorial for the next issue. For now, however, I ask members of the CIL family and the information literacy community to join in celebrating Bob's greatness as an editor, partner, leader, and dear friend. We wish Bob a long, healthy, and very happy retirement with his beloved wife, Laura.